

Obama Rues Loss of 'American Leadership' on Climate Change

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Highlight: Speaking at a conference in Indonesia, Mr. Obama indirectly criticized President Trump for pulling out of the Paris climate agreement.

Body

Former President Barack Obama on Saturday indirectly criticized President Trump in a speech delivered in Indonesia for withdrawing "American leadership" on climate change by abandoning the Paris accord.

"In Paris, we came together around the most ambitious agreement in history about climate change, an agreement that even with the temporary absence of American leadership can still give our children a fighting chance," Mr. Obama said at the Fourth Congress of Indonesian Diaspora in Jakarta, the capital, according to The Associated Press.

Speaking at the end of a 10-day tour of the Southeast Asian country where he spent part of his childhood, Mr. Obama drew a sharp contrast to Mr. Trump's "America first" philosophy, without mentioning his successor by name. He called for nations to come together to confront global challenges like terrorism and climate change, and he cautioned against "an aggressive kind of nationalism" creeping into politics.

"The challenges of our times, whether it's economic inequality, changing climate, terrorism, mass migration — these are real challenges, and we're going to have to confront them together," he said.

Mr. Trump announced last month that he would pull the United States out of the 2015 Paris accord, in which nearly 200 nations pledged to curb greenhouse gas emissions. The Obama administration had agreed as part of that pact to cut emissions 26 to 28 percent below 2005 levels within 10 years, and to help support poor countries dealing with the consequences of disasters stemming from climate change.

Mr. Trump suggested other nations had bested the United States in the negotiations and called the climate deal a bad one for America, saying he had been "elected to represent the citizens of Pittsburgh, not Paris."

Besides announcing the withdrawal from the Paris agreement, the Trump administration is unraveling domestic measures that would have helped the United States reach its emissions target. The administration's plan for rolling back Mr. Obama's sweeping federal regulation on coal-fired power plants, known as the Clean Power Plan, is expected to be released in the coming days.

Mr. Obama and his family have been touring Indonesia, where he and his mother lived for several years beginning when he was 6 years old. The Obamas visited his childhood home in Jakarta, went rafting on the resort island of Bali and visited famous sites like Borobodur, the 9th-century Buddhist temple. On Friday, Mr. Obama met with President Joko Widodo.

Mr. Obama said in his speech Saturday that he had never forgotten his time in Indonesia, contrasting the Jakarta of today with the city he remembered. "If the rainy season came, the floods would come up to your waist, and you'd

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have to clean out the floors in your house and then chase the chickens because they'd gone someplace else," he said to laughter.

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